

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 15-19. Claims 15-19 have been amended to improve their form and to delete reference numerals. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph, as being indefinite for lacking proper antecedent basis for the phrase "wiping cloth" in line 4 and in the use of the phrase "are realized in the form" in line 12. In response, Applicants have amended claim 15 to improve its form and have removed the objected to phrases, which it is respectfully submitted overcomes the rejection of the claims on that basis.

Claims 15-16 and 18-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 4,439,363 in view of DE 909,549 (presumably EP 909,549, which was cited in the International Search Report along with the DE 363 reference). The remaining claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over these references and further in view of the statements in the Specification that it is known to fold the edges of a cloth for wiping floors over and onto the upper side, and to secure the edges thereby gluing them to the upper side.

Essentially, the Examiner's position was that DE 363 shows the textile cloth for wiping floors recited in the claims, except for the use of strips of felt and that the DE 909 reference (presumably EP549 reference) teaches the use of suitable stiffening or reinforcing strips in order to reinforce the wiping cloth at the edge of the frame against protruding at the edge area.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 15, as amended, Applicants' invention provides a textile cloth for wiping floors comprising a flexurally soft textile material having edge areas and thick, dimensionally stable reinforcing strips of felt extending over the length of the edge areas. The cloth can be detachably mounted on a tentering frame of a manual cleaning device so that the edge areas at least partially laterally project beyond the holding surfaces of the tentering frame. The edge areas are reinforced by the reinforcing strips which are approximately as wide as the edge areas, and are supported with their inner edges against the outer edge of the tentering frame to resist upward pivotal movement of the edge areas. In this way, a textile cloth is provided which has enhanced inherent stiffness and

dimensional stability both in the direction of and transversely to the edge of the cloth.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest the structure of the textile cloth as recited in claim 15 or teaches the benefit of using thick, dimensionally stable reinforcing strips of felt in such a cloth. The primary reference DE 44 39 363 A1 discloses a textile floor mop cover that differs from Applicants' textile cloth both in structure and in the material of the reinforcement strips. The reinforcement strip disclosed in the DE 363 is a rubber profile. Nowhere is there disclosed or suggested the use of shape-retaining felt strips.

The use of felt instead of rubber has the decisive advantage that the floor mop cover can be wrung out well even in its edge regions. In contrast, the rubber profile of DE 363 is relatively tough and makes mechanical wringing difficult. Felt, on the other hand, becomes filled with water when damp-mopping, and thereby guarantees full floor contact of the cleaning textile in its edge regions. However, felt is also flexible enough so that it can be wrung out even by a mechanical press, with which many professional cleaning carts are equipped. Another advantage of the felt lies in its textile structure, which is similar to the

cleaning cover. The cleaning cover can therefore be sewn together with the felt in excellent manner, over a large area, so that the floor mop cover can have a high mechanical stress applied to it by means of the stretching frame. This internal tension advantageously solidifies the entire floor mop cover during cleaning, and breaks down as soon as the floor mop cover is removed from the stretching frame, so that it can be washed out and wrung out in an excellent manner.

In contrast, rubber as taught by DE 363, cannot easily be sewn together with the textile cover, and does not withstand any permanent stretching areas.

In addition, felt, as a natural product, has an excellent reputation, particularly among ecologically oriented consumers, so that the sale of this floor mop cover can also be extended to those households that have a negative attitude towards modern cleaning devices until now.

The defects and deficiencies of the primary reference DE 363 are nowhere remedied by the secondary reference EP 0 909 549. It should be noted that in the assessment of the floor mop cover disclosed in EP 549, it is respectfully submitted that the

Examiner incorrectly derives the statement that the reinforcement strips can consist of different materials from the abstract of that reference. In fact, EP 549 teaches only that the woven cleaning fabric (2) can consist of different materials. The stabilization band (4), on the other hand, preferably consists of a slightly shrinking plastic band, preferably of polyester, acrylic, polyamide, or another polymer. See, column 3, lines 56 and following, of EP 549. There is no disclosure or suggestion of felt in EP 549.

In addition, the stabilization band 4 known from EP 549 lies on the top of the stretching frame. See FIGS. 4 and 3 of EP 549. This stabilization band does not rest against the outer edge of the stretching frame with its inner edge, as taught by Applicants' claim 15.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that neither DE 363 nor EP 549, whether alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the textile cloth for wiping floors which uses thick, shape-retaining felt strips as reinforcement strips. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and dependent claims 16-19 are patentable over the cited references.

In summary, claims 15-19 have been amended. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
GREGOR KOHLRUSS ET AL. - 8 (PCT)

COLLARD & ROE, P.C.
1077 Northern Boulevard
Roslyn, New York 11576
(516) 365-9802
FJD:jc

Allison C. Collard, Reg.No.22,532
Edward R. Freedman, Reg.No.26,048
Frederick J. Dorchak, Reg.No.29,298
Attorneys for Applicant

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Fax No. 703-872-9306

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent by facsimile-transmission to the Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on December 16, 2004.

Frederick J. Dorchak